



ACTION STRINGS

Manual



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1 Welcome to ACTION STRINGS

Thank you for purchasing ACTION STRINGS. This document will give you some information about the library, as well as instructions and advice on how to use it.

We hope that you will enjoy using ACTION STRINGS.

About ACTION STRINGS

ACTION STRINGS is a cinematic string phrase library designed for ease of use in musical productions. Patterns can be triggered at a select pitch from the respective key on your MIDI keyboard and then modified while staying in sync with your host project. In regard to sound options, ACTION STRINGS offers two microphone positions and a selection of easy-to-use audio effects.

The ACTION STRINGS library contains 154 phrases, which were all performed live by a full string orchestra and were recorded with two microphone settings: Stage (or close) and Far. In addition to that, ACTION STRINGS features 62 Themes, each of which is a group of 5 phrases that belong together.

2 Using ACTION STRINGS

The ACTION STRINGS instrument is designed to be played using a MIDI keyboard. The loops are triggered and selected by MIDI, allowing for fast orchestral scoring.

Phrases will automatically sync to the master, or host tempo. Thanks to the high-quality time-stretching algorithm in KONTAKT 5, the phrases in this library can be played at any tempo between 100bpm and 250bpm without any noticeable artifacts.



While it is possible to use the phrases at tempos below 100bpm or above 250bpm, the audio quality may start to lessen noticeably at more extreme settings.

2.1 Phrase Selection and Playback

Up to 10 phrases can be assigned to selected key-switches from C0 upwards via the user interface (this process is described in section [↑3.2, Theme and Phrase Controls \(SLOTS 1-5 and SLOTS 6-10\)](#)). These key-switches are displayed as red keys in KONTAKT's on-screen keyboard.



The KONTAKT on-screen keyboard displaying the active key-switches (in red) and the trigger keys (in blue).

- ▶ To **select a phrase using your MIDI keyboard**, press the relative MIDI note. You can switch between phrases in a legato manner, allowing you to easily change a pattern half way through a bar without missing a beat.
- ▶ To **select a phrase from the user interface**, click on the note name of the phrase you wish to use.



Getting ready to select the phrase on the C#0 key

- To **play a phrase**, press any key in the Range C2-C5 on your MIDI keyboard or on KONTAKT's on-screen keyboard. The phrase will then play at the same pitch as the key you used to trigger playback.



ACTION STRINGS is polyphonic, so you can play multiple pitches at once.

2.2 Selecting Different Phrase Modes

Within the ACTION STRINGS Instrument, keyboard velocity is not used to control dynamics, but is used to select different phrase modes:

- **Velocity Range 1-69:** Major Mode (if applicable)
- **Velocity Range 70-125:** Minor Mode (if applicable)
- **Velocity Range 126-127:** Staccato One Shot

2.3 Controlling the Dynamics of Phrases

- To control the dynamics of the phrases in real-time, use the modulation wheel (Mod Wheel, MIDI controller 1) of your MIDI keyboard, or move the modulation wheel of KONTAKT's on-screen keyboard.

- To set the dynamics to a fixed value, use the **EXPRESSION** slider to the top left of the ACTION STRINGS user interface.



Note that you cannot automate this control as it could interfere with the Mod Wheel signal.

3 The ACTION STRINGS User Interface

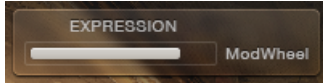
The ACTION STRINGS user interface allows you to set up the phrases, load preset themes, and alter the sound of the instrument.



The ACTION STRINGS interface, as it appears when first opened.

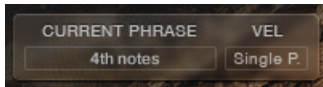
At the top of the Performance view, below the usual KONTAKT Instrument header controls, you will notice two boxes:

- **EXPRESSION**: The Expression indicator to the left displays the current Mod Wheel value (and thus also the dynamic level).



The Expression/ModWheel Indicator

- **CURRENT PHRASE and VEL**: The box to the right displays the current (or most recently played) phrase in the **CURRENT PHRASE** indicator. The Velocity indicator (labeled **VEL**) displays the velocity mode.



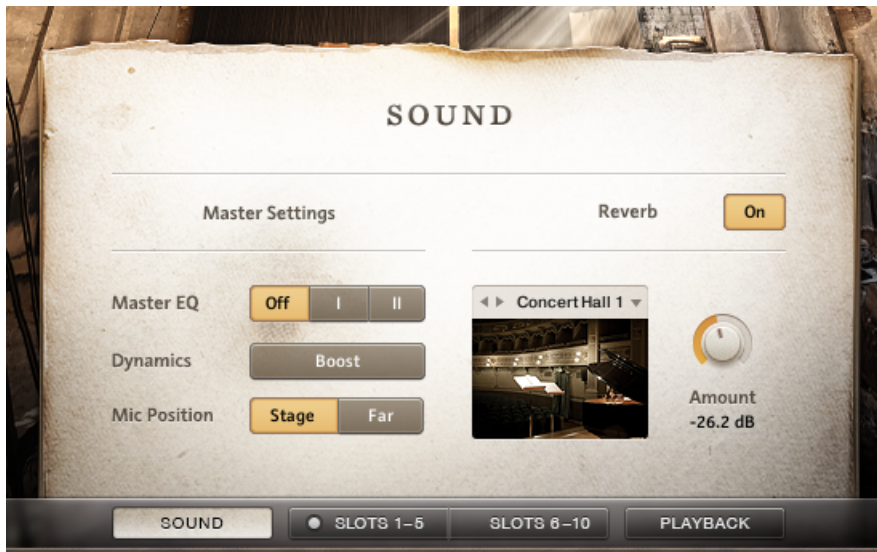
The Current Phrase and Velocity Indicator (Single P. shows that the current phrase does not have Major and Minor variations)

Four tabs at the bottom of the Performance view enable you to change the contents of the central area:

- **SOUND**: Displays the controls that affect the sound of the instrument (audio effects and microphone position).
- **SLOTS 1-5** and **SLOTS 6-10**: Display the patterns that are assigned to the respective key-switches. You can also select patterns from these pages.
- **PLAYBACK**: Displays the controls used to alter the pattern playback behavior.

3.1 The SOUND Page

Click on the **SOUND** Tab to display the Sound page. This page provides controls that you can use to adjust the sound of the ACTION STRINGS phrases to your needs.



The Sound Page

Master Settings

To the left of the Sound page are the [Master Settings](#). These are:

- [Master EQ](#): Use the three buttons to select from 2 different equalizer settings ([I](#) and [II](#)) for the instrument, or to disable the EQ ([Off](#)).
- [Dynamics](#): A single [Boost](#) button activates a combination of saturation and dynamic effects to create a louder sounding string ensemble.
- [Mic Position](#): Select from the included [Stage](#) or [Far](#) microphone sources, by clicking on their respective buttons.



Changing the microphone position will load the new samples and remove the old ones from memory, so some loading time may be required.

Reverb Settings

To the right are the [Reverb](#) controls, which control a convolution reverb effect that can be used to create a greater sense of space for the instrument. The controls and their functions are as follows:

- **On:** The reverb effect can be turned on or off by clicking on the **On** button. The reverb is active when the button glows yellow.
- An impulse response (i.e. the reverb character) can be selected from the dropdown menu. Alternatively you can cycle through the included impulse responses by using the left and right arrows to the left of the menu. The selected reverb type is displayed in the picture below.
- **Amount:** Use the **Amount** knob to control the output level of the reverb signal.

3.2 Theme and Phrase Controls (SLOTS 1-5 and SLOTS 6-10)

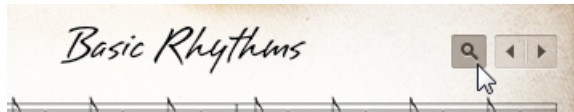
Clicking on the tabs **SLOTS 1-5** and **SLOTS 6-10** will not only display the currently loaded phrases, but will also display the controls that allow you to load different themes and phrases.

3.2.1 The Theme Browser

Themes are presets that contain 5 related phrases. These phrases are loaded into the first 5 slots (C0-E0) and the second 5 slots (F0-A0) are left unchanged.

To load a preset theme from the **SLOTS 1-5** page:

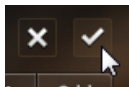
1. Click on the magnifying glass icon to the right of the theme title, this will open the Theme Browser.



- By default, all themes will be displayed in the browser. You can further refine the displayed themes by clicking on any of the category buttons at the top of the browser.



- Select a theme by clicking on its name in the browser.
- To load the currently selected theme, click on the Tick button.



If you wish to exit the Theme Browser without changing the currently loaded theme or phrases, just click on the X button to the top right of the browser.

- Alternatively, you can cycle through the included themes, without entering the Theme Browser, by clicking on the left and right arrows to the right of the magnifying glass.



Although you cannot save your own themes, your theme settings are saved with the KON-TAKT Instrument and therefore will also be saved with your host project.

3.2.2 The Phrase Controls and Browser

A preset Theme may not meet your exact needs, you may wish to change a phrase, or load additional phrases into any of the additional 5 slots.

On the pages accessed by clicking on the tabs [SLOTS 1-5](#) and [SLOTS 6-10](#), you will see the musical notations of the phrases loaded into these slots; to their left is the name of the note to which they are assigned. These musical notations are actually interactive elements:

- To display the information on any phrase, including the name, original tempo and meter information, hover the mouse cursor over the musical notation of the phrase.

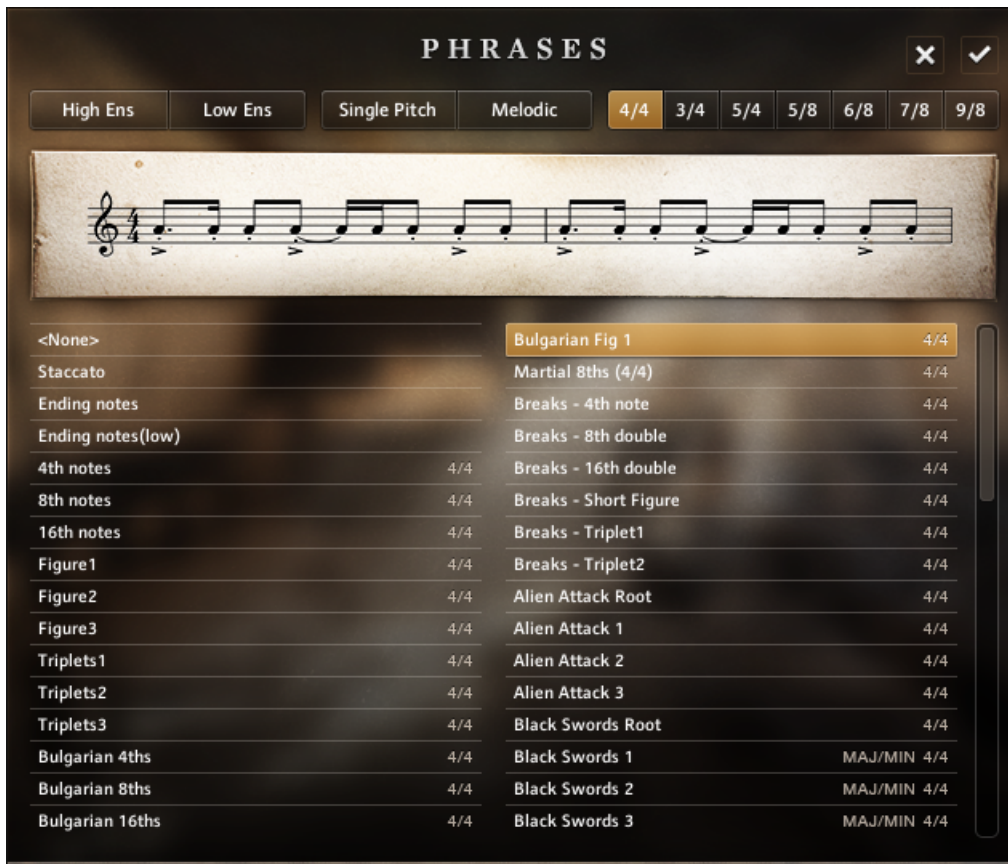


Displayed information for the phrase loaded into Slot 1



Slots 6-10 will initially be empty, and display empty musical staves. These are still interactive in the same way as the other notations in slots 1-5.

- To load a phrase into a slot, open the Phrase Browser by clicking on the phrase notation/information.



The Phrase Browser

The Phrase Browser is similar to the Theme Browser in many ways:

- To the top of the browser are a series of buttons to refine your search.
- To the very top right are the **X** and **Tick** buttons used to exit the browser or load a phrase respectively.
- The body of the browser contains a list of the available phrases.

However, the Phrase Browser has **two noticeable differences**:

- Clicking on a phrase will **display the score for the phrase in the display** box above the browser list (in the above capture, the notation displayed is that of the *Bulgarian Fig 1* phrase).
 - Clicking on a phrase will also **play a preview** of the selected phrase.
 - Phrases are loaded in the same manner as loading a Theme:
 1. Select the desired Phrase from the list in the Phrase Browser by clicking on its name.
 2. Confirm the selection by clicking the tick button to the top right of the Browser.
- The selected Phrase will now be loaded into the slot you used to access the Phrase Browser.

3.3 The PLAYBACK Page

By clicking on the [PLAYBACK](#) Tab, you will display the Playback page.



The Playback Page

This page contains three settings that affect the way the phrases are played back in the KON-TAKT Instrument:

- **Trigger Mode:** There are two Trigger Modes, selected by clicking on the two buttons. These modes are:
 - **Phrase Sync:** Newly triggered phrases will have their start position offset to match the currently playing phrases, making sure that everything plays in sync.
 - **Free Trigger:** Newly triggered phrases are always triggered from the beginning, ignoring the current playback position of any currently playing loops.
- **Phrase Change:** The **X-Fade Time** knob in this area controls the crossfade time (in milliseconds) when changing phrases.
- **Tempo:** Here you can select between 3 tempo ratios **1/2** (Half), **1:1** (Normal), or **2X** (Double), which affect the phrase playback speed relative to the master (or host) tempo.

4 Credits

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